

PCT

NOTICE INFORMING THE APPLICANT OF THE
COMMUNICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
APPLICATION TO THE DESIGNATED OFFICES

(PCT Rule 47.1(c), first sentence)

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

To:

CARTER, Chris, John
Level 10
10 Barrack Street
Sydney, New South Wales 2000
AUSTRALIE

Date of mailing (day/month/year)
24 June 2004 (24.06.2004)

Applicant's or agent's file reference
12197061/CJC

IMPORTANT NOTICE

International application No. PCT/AU2003/001653	International filing date (day/month/year) 11 December 2003 (11.12.2003)	Priority date (day/month/year) 12 December 2002 (12.12.2002)
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Applicant
ROBERTS, Timothy et al

1. Notice is hereby given that the International Bureau has communicated, as provided in Article 20, the international application to the following designated Offices on the date indicated above as the date of mailing of this notice:

AU, AZ, BY, CH, CN, CO, DZ, EP, HU, JP, KG, KP, KR, MD, MK, MZ, RU, TM, US

In accordance with Rule 47.1(c), third sentence, those Offices will accept the present notice as conclusive evidence that the communication of the international application has duly taken place on the date of mailing indicated above and no copy of the international application is required to be furnished by the applicant to the designated Office(s).

2. The following designated Offices have waived the requirement for such a communication at this time:

AE, AG, AL, AM, AP, AT, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BZ, CA, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, EA, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, ID, IL, IN, IS, KE, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MG, MN, MW, MX, NI, NO, NZ, OA, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW

The communication will be made to those Offices only upon their request. Furthermore, those Offices do not require the applicant to furnish a copy of the international application (Rule 49.1(a-bis)).

3. Enclosed with this notice is a copy of the international application as published by the International Bureau on 24 June 2004 (24.06.2004) under No. WO 2004/052748

4. TIME LIMITS for filing a demand for international preliminary examination and for entry into the national phase

The applicable time limit for entering the national phase will, subject to what is said in the following paragraph, be 30 MONTHS from the priority date, not only in respect of any elected Office if a demand for international preliminary examination is filed before the expiration of 19 months from the priority date, but also in respect of any designated Office, in the absence of filing of such demand, where Article 22(1) as modified with effect from 1 April 2002 applies in respect of that designated Office. For further details, see *PCT Gazette* No. 44/2001 of 1 November 2001, pages 19926, 19932 and 19934, as well as the *PCT Newsletter*, October and November 2001 and February 2002 issues.

In practice, time limits other than the 30-month time limit will continue to apply, for various periods of time, in respect of certain designated or elected Offices. For regular updates on the applicable time limits (20, 21, 30 or 31 months, or other time limit), Office by Office, refer to the *PCT Gazette*, the *PCT Newsletter* and the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume II, National Chapters, all available from WIPO's Internet site, at <http://www.wipo.int/pct/en/index.html>.

For filing a demand for international preliminary examination, see the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume I/A, Chapter IX. Only an applicant who is a national or resident of a PCT Contracting State which is bound by Chapter II has the right to file a demand for international preliminary examination (at present, all PCT Contracting States are bound by Chapter II).

It is the applicant's sole responsibility to monitor all these time limits.

The International Bureau of WIPO
34, chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Authorized officer

Dorothée Mülhausen

Facsimile No.+41 22 740 14 35

Facsimile No.+41 22 338 87 40

The claims:

1. Apparatus for the contained inspection and possible transportation of a potentially dangerous object, the apparatus including:
 - 5 an inspection unit, the inspection unit able to open to receive the object and then close to provide a sealed environment for manual inspection of the object, the inspection unit also including at least one glove member allowing a user external to the sealed environment of the closed inspection unit to manipulate the object within the closed inspection unit; and,
 - 10 a transportation unit adapted to wholly receive the inspection unit and provide a further sealed environment containing the inspection unit; whereby, the combination of the inspection unit and the transportation unit safely contain the object for possible transportation.
- 15 2. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the inspection unit is substantially transparent.
3. The apparatus as claimed in either claim 1 or claim 2, wherein at least a portion of a body section or a base section of the inspection unit is opaque,
 - 20 preferably of a dark colour.
4. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 3, wherein the object is an envelope, mail, package, parcel, letter or the like.
- 25 5. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 4, wherein the inspection unit includes a first section and a second section adapted to be clamped or latched together.
- 30 6. The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the first section and the second section are hinged together.
7. The apparatus as claimed in either claim 5 or claim 6, wherein the first section is a lid section and the second section is a body section or a base section.

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8. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 7, wherein the sealed environments of the inspection unit and the transportation unit are substantially airtight.
- 5 9. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 8, wherein the user can visually inspect the object in the inspection unit.
10. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 9, wherein two glove members are provided.
- 10 11. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 10, wherein the transportation unit includes a first section and a second section adapted to be clamped together.
- 15 12. The apparatus as claimed in claim 11, wherein the first section and the second section of the transportation unit are hinged together.
13. The apparatus as claimed in either claim 11 or claim 12, wherein the first section is a lid section and the second section is a body section or a base section.
- 20 14. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 10, wherein the transportation unit includes a lid section and a body section or base section adapted to be press-sealed together.
- 25 15. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 14, wherein the transportation unit is resilient against external forces and shocks.
16. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 15, wherein the inspection unit also includes integrated magnifying means.
- 30 17. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 16, wherein the transportation unit includes padding or shock absorbing material.

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18. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 17, wherein closure of the transportation unit securely holds the inspection unit placed therein.

19. Device for the contained inspection and safe transportation for further examination, if required, of received mail, the device comprising:
5 an inspection unit adapted to provide a sealed environment, the inspection unit allowing a user to visually inspect received mail placed in the inspection unit, the inspection unit also including one or more glove members allowing the user to manipulate the mail within the inspection unit; and,
10 a transportation unit adapted to wholly receive the inspection unit after user inspection of the mail and to provide a further sealed environment and physical protection for the inspection unit during transportation.

20. The device as claimed in claim 19, wherein the inspection unit and the
15 transportation unit are each formed of substantially two distinct sections and additionally provided with one or more clamps to seal the units.



12 October, 2004

The Commissioner of Patents
WODEN ACT 2606

Our Ref: 12197061/CJC

Re: Timothy Roberts AND Margaret Head
International Patent Application No.
PCT/AU2003/001653
"Apparatus for contained inspection and transportation of
suspect objects"

Dear Sir/Madam,

We refer to the Written Opinion dated 6 August 2004 in respect of the above-referenced International Application.

1. SUBMISSIONS

Under section V of the Written Opinion the Examiner considers that all the claims are novel in light of cited documents D1-D5, but that none of the claims include an inventive step in light of a combination of cited documents D1-D9, or D1-D5 and common general knowledge.

In addressing the Examiner's objections, the Applicant has revised the claims of the present application. A set of amended claims is submitted herewith. A copy of the amended claims indicating the nature and location of the amendments, together with a Statement of Proposed Amendments, is also attached.

It is submitted that the amended claims overcome all of the objections raised in the Written Opinion and are fairly based on the specification as originally filed.

The Applicant respectfully submits that the amended claims define a patentable invention which is novel and involves an inventive step in light of the cited documents D1-D9, either taken individually or in combination.

Davies Collison Cave

PATENT & TRADE MARK
ATTORNEYS

Sydney

Level 10
10 Barrack Street
Sydney, New South Wales
Australia, 2000

GPO Box 3876
Sydney, New South Wales
Australia, 2001

Telephone:

+61 2 9262 2611

Facsimile:

+61 2 9262 1080

e-mail:

mail@davies.com.au

Web site:

<http://www.davies.com.au>

ABN: 22 077 969 519

Other Offices:

Melbourne, Brisbane, Canberra

In association with:
Davies Collison Cave Solicitors
Intellectual Property Law

The Applicant also submits the following comments, which outline some important differences between the cited documents and the invention claimed in the amended claims.

D1 discloses a flexible work chamber. The chamber requires use of valve 40. In Fig. 5, part of the container 20 is flexible, while lower container walls 20b are rigid. However, the presently claimed invention includes an inspection unit including "at least a first section and a second section able to open to receive the object and then to close". Furthermore, referring to presently amended claim 1, "the first section and the second section being substantially rigid" is a feature of the presently claimed invention. D1 neither discloses or suggests such "a first section" and "a second section" which are able to open and which are substantially rigid. Hence, D1 does not disclose "an inspection unit" as presently claimed. None of the cited documents D6 to D9 disclose the features of the claimed inspection unit not disclosed in D1. Hence, the combination of D1 with any of the documents D6 to D9 does not disclose or suggest the presently claimed invention.

D2 discloses an encasing for a patient for medical observation. The enclosure comprises a flexible pocket. As discussed for D1, D2 does not disclose "an inspection unit", as D2 does not disclose or suggest "a first section" and "a second section" which are "able to open to receive the object and then close", with "the first section and the second section being substantially rigid". D2 does not disclose or suggest either "an inspection unit" or "a transportation unit" as presently claimed.

D3 discloses a glove box comprising a rigid frame 2 about which a flexible glove bag 6 is shaped to fit over the frame. As for D1, D3 does not disclose "a first section" and "a second section" which are "able to open to receive the object and then close", with the first section and the second section "being substantially rigid". Hence, document D3 does not disclose "an inspection unit" as presently claimed.

D4 discloses a protective device for safely carrying out work on the wall of a receiver. The receiver contains a potentially dangerous substance. D4 does not disclose apparatus for "...transportation of a potentially dangerous object". The device disclosed in D4 is not able to transport a potentially dangerous object. Furthermore, the receiver of D4 does not include "a first section and a second section able to open to receive the object and then close to provide a sealed airtight environment". The receiver 1 of D4 contains a single wall 1. Access to the receiver is via hole 11 and lifting of a cap 3. Furthermore, when cap 3 is activated by handle 41 the receiver will not "provide a sealed airtight environment", as required by present claim 1. For at least these reasons, D4 does not disclose "an inspection unit" as recited in present claim 1.

D5 discloses a device for the handling of materials which utilises an antechamber and can be used to move a material from one chamber to another via airlocks. Chamber 12 allows access via gloves 33 to boxes 43, 44. Airlock 62 allows chamber 12 to be evacuated or a specific gas introduced to chamber 12. Materials can then be transported between boxes 43, 44. However, D5 does not disclose an inspection unit (which can only be construed as chamber 12 of D5) including "a first section and a second section able to open to receive the object". Such an operation is in direct conflict with the purpose of the device disclosed in D5.

which is to be able to transport an object between boxes 43, 44, via a vacuum created in chamber 12. The "inspection unit" of the presently claimed invention has a different purpose which is to isolate the object in the inspection unit itself, rather than the inspection unit being a conduit to pass material from one external box to another.

Thus, the Applicant asserts that none of the documents D1-D5 disclose "an inspection unit" as defined in presently amended claim 1. Consequently, the combination of any of the documents D1-D5 with any of the documents D6-D9 does not disclose the presently claimed invention, as none of the documents teach or suggest an inspection unit and a transportation unit as presently claimed.

Furthermore, it is submitted that none of the devices in documents D1-D5 teach a device that is adapted to be received by "a transportation unit". Many of the devices are large and bulky which is an express problem which the present invention addresses. Still furthermore, "the transportation unit" of the presently claimed invention is required to "provide a further sealed airtight environment containing the inspection unit". The transportation unit protects the inspection unit during transportation, hence, merely placing a fragile inspection unit within a shipping container (which are the types of containers generally disclosed in the documents cited by the Examiner) would not protect the inspection unit as the inspection unit would be free to move within the containers of the prior art.

The Examiner asserts that the features of the transportation unit as claimed in claim 1 are no more than a mere workshop improvement. However, the Examiner is reminded that although the transportation unit might be relatively easy to manufacture, this is not definitive of the invention as claimed. The invention resides in the provision of a transportation unit in itself, the transportation unit able to wholly receive the inspection unit and then close to provide a further sealed environment containing the inspection unit.

The Applicant asserts that it has been hitherto unknown to use the combination of an inspection unit and a transportation unit to deal with inspection and transportation of a potentially dangerous object. Laboratory type glove boxes have been known for some time, however, no one, to the Applicants knowledge, over a time span of many decades, has arrived at the concept of providing an inspection unit that can also be readily transported in a protective transportation unit adapted to receive the inspection unit when a dangerous object is identified therein. The problem addressed by the present invention has, to the Applicant's knowledge, been ongoing for many years. To the Applicant's knowledge, no one has addressed this important problem with apparatus as claimed in the present invention. The Examiner would appear to be incorrectly applying *ex-post facto* analysis to assert the invention as obvious. Taking the position of the skilled person as at the priority date of the application, it is respectfully asserted that the Examiner's analysis is not correct.

2. REQUESTS

The Applicant has made an earnest attempt to overcome all of the Examiner's objections. With the above submissions and clarifications in addition to the proposed amendments to the claims, it is respectfully submitted that the Applicant has addressed and overcome the objections set forth in the Written Opinion.

October, 2004

It is therefore requested that an International Preliminary Examination Report be issued with a favourable response in relation to the present claims as amended. If, however, the Examiner does not agree with the above, it is requested that a further Written Opinion be promptly issued to allow the Applicant further opportunity to respond.

Yours respectfully,
DAVIES COLLISON CAVE

DR. CHRIS J. CARTER
ccarter@davies.com.au

FIRST STATEMENT OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
UNDER ARTICLE 34 OF THE PCT

IN RESPECT OF

INTERNATIONAL PATENT APPLICATION NO. PCT/AU2003/001653

BY

TIMOTHY ROBERTS AND MARGARET HEAD

1. Delete the set of claims presently on file on pages numbered 13-15, and insert new set of claims on pages numbered 13-15 enclosed herewith in duplicate, one copy indicating the nature and location of the proposed amendments.

12 October, 2004

The claims:

1. Apparatus for the contained inspection and possible transportation of a potentially dangerous object, the apparatus comprising:

5 an inspection unit, the inspection unit including at least a first section and a second section able to open to receive the object and then close to provide a sealed airtight environment for manual inspection of the object, the first section and the second section being substantially rigid, the inspection unit also including at least one glove member allowing a user external to the sealed environment of
10 the closed inspection unit to manipulate the object within the closed inspection unit; and,

15 a transportation unit, the transportation unit including at least a first section and a second section able to open to wholly receive the inspection unit and then close to provide a further sealed airtight environment containing the inspection unit, the first section and the second section of the transportation unit being substantially rigid.

2. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the
20 inspection unit is substantially transparent.

3. The apparatus as claimed in either claim 1 or claim 2, wherein at least a portion of a body section or a base section of the inspection unit is opaque, preferably of a dark colour.

25 4. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 3, wherein the object is an envelope, mail, package, parcel, letter or the like.

30 5. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 4, wherein the first section and the second section of the inspection unit are adapted to be clamped or latched together.

6. The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the first section and the second section of the inspection unit are hinged together.

7. The apparatus as claimed in either claim 5 or claim 6, wherein the first section of the inspection unit is a lid section and the second section of the inspection unit is a body section or a base section.

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8. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 7, wherein the transportation unit can generally be lifted and moved by a single person..

9. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 8, wherein the user 10 can visually inspect the object in the inspection unit.

10. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 9, wherein two glove members are provided.

15 11. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 10, wherein the first section and the second section of the transportation unit are adapted to be clamped together.

12. The apparatus as claimed in claim 11, wherein the first section and the 20 second section of the transportation unit are hinged together.

13. The apparatus as claimed in either claim 11 or claim 12, wherein the first section of the transportation unit is a lid section and the second section of the transportation unit is a body section or a base section.

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14. The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein the lid section and the body section or base section of the transportation unit are adapted to be press-sealed together.

30 15. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 14, wherein the transportation unit is resilient against external forces and shocks.

16. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 15, wherein the inspection unit also includes integrated magnifying means.

17. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 16, wherein the transportation unit includes padding or shock absorbing material.
- 5 18. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 17, wherein closure of the transportation unit securely holds the inspection unit placed therein.
19. Device for the contained inspection and safe transportation for further examination, if required, of received mail, the device comprising:
 - 10 a substantially rigid inspection unit adapted to provide a sealed airtight environment, the inspection unit allowing a user to visually inspect received mail placed in the inspection unit, the inspection unit also including one or more glove members allowing the user to manipulate the mail within the inspection unit; and,
 - 15 a substantially rigid transportation unit adapted to wholly receive and secure the inspection unit after user inspection of the mail and to provide a further sealed airtight environment and physical protection for the inspection unit during transportation.
20. The device as claimed in claim 19, wherein the inspection unit and the transportation unit are each formed of substantially two distinct sections and additionally provided with one or more clamps to seal the units.

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The claims:

1. Apparatus for the contained inspection and possible transportation of a potentially dangerous object, the apparatus including comprising:
 - 5 an inspection unit, the inspection unit including at least a first section and a second section able to open to receive the object and then close to provide a sealed airtight environment for manual inspection of the object, the first section and the second section being substantially rigid, the inspection unit also including at least one glove member allowing a user external to the sealed environment of the closed inspection unit to manipulate the object within the closed inspection unit; and,
 - 10 a transportation unit, the transportation unit including at least a first section and a second section able to open to wholly receive the inspection unit and then close to ~~adapted to~~ wholly receive the inspection unit and provide a further sealed airtight environment containing the inspection unit, the first section and the second section of the transportation unit being substantially rigid; - 15 ~~whereby, the combination of the inspection unit and the transportation unit safely contain the object for possible transportation.~~
- 20 2. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the inspection unit is substantially transparent.
3. The apparatus as claimed in either claim 1 or claim 2, wherein at least a portion of a body section or a base section of the inspection unit is opaque, 25 preferably of a dark colour.
4. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 3, wherein the object is an envelope, mail, package, parcel, letter or the like.
- 30 5. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 4, wherein the inspection unit includes a first section and a the second section of the inspection unit are adapted to be clamped or latched together.

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6. The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the first section and the second section of the inspection unit are hinged together.

7. The apparatus as claimed in either claim 5 or claim 6, wherein the first section of the inspection unit is a lid section and the second section of the inspection unit is a body section or a base section.

8. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 7, wherein the ~~sealed environments of the inspection unit and the transportation unit can generally be lifted and moved by a single person~~ are substantially airtight.

9. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 8, wherein the user can visually inspect the object in the inspection unit.

10. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 9, wherein two glove members are provided.

11. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 10, wherein the ~~transportation unit includes a first section and a~~ the second section of the transportation unit are adapted to be clamped together.

12. The apparatus as claimed in claim 11, wherein the first section and the second section of the transportation unit are hinged together.

13. The apparatus as claimed in either claim 11 or claim 12, wherein the first section of the transportation unit is a lid section and the second section of the transportation unit is a body section or a base section.

14. The apparatus as claimed in ~~any one of the claims 1 to 13~~, wherein the ~~transportation unit includes a~~ the lid section and the body section or base section of the transportation unit are adapted to be press-sealed together.

15. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 14, wherein the transportation unit is resilient against external forces and shocks.

16. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 15, wherein the inspection unit also includes integrated magnifying means.

5 17. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 16, wherein the transportation unit includes padding or shock absorbing material.

18. The apparatus as claimed in any one of the claims 1 to 17, wherein closure of the transportation unit securely holds the inspection unit placed therein.

10 19. Device for the contained inspection and safe transportation for further examination, if required, of received mail, the device comprising:
an substantially rigid inspection unit adapted to provide a sealed airtight environment, the inspection unit allowing a user to visually inspect received mail placed in the inspection unit, the inspection unit also including one or more glove members allowing the user to manipulate the mail within the inspection unit; and,
15 a substantially rigid transportation unit adapted to wholly receive and secure the inspection unit after user inspection of the mail and to provide a further sealed airtight environment and physical protection for the inspection unit during transportation.

20 20. The device as claimed in claim 19, wherein the inspection unit and the transportation unit are each formed of substantially two distinct sections and additionally provided with one or more clamps to seal the units.